



The World in 1 John

Patrick J. Griffiths

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An Introduction

In the study of the Bible several initial thoughts might prove helpful. First, the Bible came to us from God. It is an inspired book. In fact, it is the only book ever written by God through human instrumentation. Second, the Bible tells a single *Story*. This *Story* has six broad “acts”: God, Creation, Rejection, Redemption, Re-Creation and Joy through Worship. Third, at the center of this *Story* is Jesus. He is God’s means of rescuing the fallen, reversing the curse and restoring everything back to its original design. Fourth, in reading the Bible different approaches can be employed. They are as follows.

1. Historical theology looks at theological thought within its historical **development**. It provides a snapshot of thought. It speaks to what people thought during a specific period within church history.
2. Biblical theology considers thought as presented by a **single book** of the Bible or by a **single author** such as the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts or the 13 Letters written by the Apostle Paul.
3. Systematic theology seeks to take all of the various categories touched on by the various books and **catalogue** common themes.
4. Finally, dogmatic theology gives **labels** to groupings and presuppositions made by Systematic theology such as Dispensational or Covenant Theology and Reformed and Arminian Theologies.

The short readings you are about to encounter focus on biblical theology within the author’s historical context. The Apostle John wrote the Gospel of John, the three Letters of

John and the Book of Revelation. These readings will only focus on his first Letter. Although this is the limitation of the study, it is not inconsistent with anything anyone would read elsewhere. What such a study does do is force us to wrestle with what Pastor John is saying and not read into the text something that is not being said by the Apostle. Each study has a thorough reading of the various passages. Although it might prove daunting initially, the return on this small investment is notable.

So enjoy. May the following readings drive you into the text and then through the text to Jesus. Truly, He is beautiful.

The World in 1 John

Our initial study found us “marking” sin [cf. Sin in 1 John]. Sin leaves the sinner empty and in humanly unfixable need. Sin permeates the world. It encases the world. It is with this in mind we tackle Pastor John’s usage of the word “world.” The world has several meanings. Our intent is not to exhaust various meanings, but to focus on Pastor John’s usage of the word world in his first letter to the churches of Asia Minor.

In speaking on Pastor John’s usage of the word “world” I would like to note two preliminary ideas that will help box our discussion. First, John is not using the word world for worldliness as commonly understood. The word “worldly” is **kosmikos** and is only used twice in the New Testament (Titus 2:12; Heb. 9:1).

“instructing us to deny ungodliness and **worldly** desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age” (Titus 2:12).

“Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the **earthly** sanctuary” (Heb. 9:1).

The idea of being worldly is being of the earth. In Titus 2:12 it isn’t the desires that are sinful, but those excited by the world which pull us from faith in Christ. Hebrews 9:1 speak of earthly as shadow with nothing implied.

Although the word “worldly” is only used twice, the idea is present in passages like Colossians 3:1-4.

¹“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. ³For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory” (Col. 3:1-4).

Worldliness is not intrinsic to possessing anything. Typically we look at people with possessions and speak of their worldliness. Again, worldliness is not in what you possess but rather in what possesses you. Worldliness is when something replaces God in your life. Worldliness is unbelief. Worldliness rejects God’s *Story* and replaces it with something else. The apostle Peter reflected a worldly mindset when he opposed the cross (Matt. 16:21-23). It is possible to be knotted by the weight of this world and the sins that so easily entangle us, but our response to such entanglement is to push back and against such things (Heb. 12:1, 2). Thus Pastor John does not address the idea of worldliness apart from unbelief, and unbelief in 1 John is damnable.

The second thought necessary in our study is not to superimpose hundreds of years of theological discourse onto 1 John. Dogmatic theology will come to 1 John 2:2 with two prominent options as to whether the death Christ died is actually removing the sins of the world or if John’s understanding of the world is limited to those chosen by the Father before the foundation of the world. The question raised by some is whether the atonement is limited or unlimited. This is part of the John Calvin and Jacob Arminius debate. Although the two ideas share much in common there is a polarization between the two that divides fellowship and separates good churches from gospel

alliance. I believe there is a time and place for the discussion, but I will only touch on it in passing in this booklet [cf. See Appendix 1 & 2]. Let us not be distracted from what is primary as we continue to celebrate the beauty of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Let us now turn our attention to 1 John. “The word *kosmos* occurs 23 times in 1 John, and its meaning varies according to context. In one place it means the natural world (3:17), in several places it bears a locative sense—the place into which various ones go or in which they live (4:1, 4, 9, 14, 17; cf. 2 John 7), in other places it denotes ‘worldly’ values or attitudes that are opposed to God (2:15-17 [6x]; 5:4 [2x], 5), and in yet other places it denotes the unbelieving world—people who are opposed to God and believers, and who are under the power of the evil one (3:1, 13; 4:5 [3x]; 5:19).”¹

Pastor John describes a world that lies in the power of the evil one. This world stands in active opposition to the Father’s will. This world is of the serpent’s seed and is actively opposed to the woman’s seed. This world is “marketing” its opposition so that others would follow its ways. It is persistently soliciting and relentlessly appealing to the natural man to remain in his trespasses and sins. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. As a result of His victory His children are victorious over the evil one. God keeps His people and the devil cannot attach to them. They are like “Teflon.” What he says might indeed be true of them (Rev. 12:10), but none of it sticks (1 John 4:17).

“In the Johannine literature the ‘world’ often means the people of the world. The world did not know the Word (John 1:10), the Lamb who would take away its sin (John

1:29). God loved the world, sending his Son into it to save rather than condemn it (John 3:16-17; 12:47; 1 John 4:9). The Son of God is the ‘Savior of the world’ (John 4:42; 1 John 4:14), giving life to it as the ‘bread of life’ (John 6:33; John 6:51).”²

In light of this, let us consider Pastor John’s understanding of the world as used in his First Letter. There are four categories we will consider as we look at the world as used by Pastor John.

- I. This world is in active opposition to God and rests in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19).

“We know that we are of God, and that **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one**” (1 John 5:19).

This spirit of antichrist permeates this present world (1 John 4:1-4). This rebellious world markets its spirit in order to take down the vision of God (1 John 2:15-17; 4:5). Just as God’s vision is for the knowledge of His glory to encompass the world (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14), so also follows the work of the devil.

“They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them” (1 John 4:5).

We must never view the unbelieving as innocent bystanders in the drama unfolding all around us. Sinners are not passive spectators but active participants in their rebellion against God. This brings us to our second point.

- II. This world is actively “marketing” its opposition to God (1 John 2:15-17).

¹⁵ “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:15-17).

This world is of the serpent’s seed [think of the flood narrative {Gen. 6-9}]. Many within the world would argue how the world is getting better, not worse. Perhaps the world is better for the comfort and convenience of the creaturely, but to think this world is openly embracing the gospel and becoming more dependent on God is silly.

The world opposed to God is in open and active rebellion against God. The world is neither passive nor neutral. It is forcefully pushing and pulling individuals into its mold (Rom. 12:1, 2). It isn’t simply form, but intent. The devil desires for us to drape ourselves in the garments of unbelief. He desires for our hearts to be turned toward the shadow and away from Jesus. We must never look at anything around us as impartial. The shadow can never provide, it can only point; and it is when we lean on the shadow that we find enslavement and bondage.

We must place the perpetual rebellion against God inside of the greater *Story* told in Genesis 3:15 and Genesis 3:21. In order for God to rescue His people **from their sin and for their joy** He would send His only begotten Son into the world to be the Savior of His people. God’s Christ, His hero would be met with fierce opposition by the serpent’s offspring. The world is this offspring. This world does not

know the Father (1 John 3:1). In fact, this world hates God and those born of God (1 John 3:13).

“See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. **For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him**” (1 John 3:1).

“Do not be surprised, brethren, **if the world hates you**” (1 John 3:13).

From Pastor John’s perspective those who need God’s wrath placated, need Jesus to be their Savior and need Him as their Advocate (1 John 2:1, 2) are those in active opposition to Him. God’s plan of rescue is through the woman’s seed. The third category for world in Pastor John’s Letter is noted in 1 John 2:2.

III. The death Christ died placates the wrath of God against the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2; 4:9, 14).

“and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, **but also for those of the whole world**” (1 John 2:2).

“By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world **so that we might live through Him**” (1 John 4:9).

“We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be **the Savior of the world**” (1 John 4:14).

The world noted by John in 1 John 2:2 is comprised of Jews AND Gentiles who are fallen and in active rebellion against God. In passing, note the statement “the whole world.” It is exactly the same as in 1 John 5:19. If we limit 1 John 2:2

should we then limit 1 John 5:19? This same difficulty is present in Romans 5:12-21 where we understand depravity to be universal, but not the atonement. Yet the grammatical structure is the same. The difference between the two is belief or unbelief. But let us go back to our text. Verses like 1 John 2:2 and 1 John 4:14 have come under intense scrutiny and whose conclusions can polarize equally good people.

I will pause here for a minute only to inform you of a conversation that flows out of this passage regarding the extent of Christ's atonement. There are several categories of theology: **HISTORICAL THEOLOGY** [i.e. Development], **BIBLICAL THEOLOGY** [i.e. Singular authors/books], **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY** [i.e. Cataloguing and categories] and **DOGMATIC THEOLOGY** [i.e. Labels and particulars]. The category being considered will shape how this topic is discussed.

Inside of systematic and dogmatic theology people often wrangle over the extent of the death Jesus died. Their discussion falls into three categories.

- Limited Design
 - [i.e. only the elect will be saved]
- Limited Application
 - [i.e. anyone can be saved]
- Universalism
 - [i.e. everyone will be saved]

I wish such were true, but I will dismiss universalism as inapplicable for our study. If we work from what we know, we will be able to work backward to what we do not know. The discussion looks like this.

Jesus Died
 |
 For the World
 |
 He is your Savior, if . . .
 You agree with God about your sin and Jesus
 |
 The issue is for whom did Jesus die and who will believe?
 [Here we have a least two options/perspectives]

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive [God knows] • After the Fact / He saw what you would do • Prevenient Grace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causative [God chooses] • Before the Fact/ He causes you to do it • Efficacious Grace
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In the category of dogmatic theology a cognitive election whereby God knows who will choose Him and thus because of their choice of Him He chooses them. This is within Arminian [i.e. D.A.I.S.Y]³ where the scale is tipped toward the freewill of mankind. In a causative election God chooses who will choose Him and thus because of His choice of them they choose Him. Here the scale is tipped toward divine sovereignty or divine determinism. This is within Reform Theology or Calvinism [i.e. T.U.L.I.P].

I enjoy this category of study, but I do not hold to it dogmatically [by this I mean I do not necessarily identify those who believe otherwise as non-brethren]. We are safe in saying what Pastor John says in 1 John 2:2; 4:9, 10, 14.

“and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, **but also for those of the whole world**” (1 John 2:2).

⁹“By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world **so that we might live through Him**. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that **He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins**” (1 John 4:9, 10).

“We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be **the Savior of the world**” (1 John 4:14).

Listen to how the Apostle Paul speaks of this to the Elder Timothy.

⁹“It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. ¹⁰For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, **who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers**. ¹¹Prescribe and teach these things” (1 Tim. 4:9-11).

Yet, how might we understand the provision placating the wrath of God for the entire world if the world collectively does not benefit from this provision? The issue isn't simply for whom did Jesus die, but the extent of placation made by His sacrifice. Yet the atonement enables God to be gracious to everyone through common grace. It is election that makes salvific faith efficacious. However, we do not need to probe too deeply at this time with this subject matter. There is a time and place for such a study, but it is a subject matter that is more extensive than this small booklet.

In our study of 1 John we have concluded that Pastor John writes to the churches of Asia Minor that are predominately filled with Gentile believers. Those who are rejecting their own culpability before God and thus deny Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God could in all probability be Jews who remain in Judaism. Although my intent is not to argue for a particular redemption, I do like the reasoning of inclusion that encompasses both the Jew **and** the Gentile.

Regardless as to where you fall in the discussion the following is true.

- You are a sinner.
- Jesus is the only Savior.
- Unless you repent, you shall perish.
- Should you not hear, it will be no fault of God.
- Should you hear and not believe, it will be no fault of God.
- The only person blamable for your unbelief is you.

Thus, for me the issue of for whom did Jesus die is important, but the greater issue is inviting everyone everywhere to come to Jesus. If I can speak with a degree of baseness, I would rather have a theological Calvinist who openly shares the gospel with everyone everywhere than an Arminian who does not. **The issue isn't their theological orientation, but their gospel proclamation.**

Because Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God the provision made by the Father in sending His only begotten Son is sufficient for every sin ever committed or possibly committed. And as difficult as it is for us to realize such a profound truth, had the Father willed everyone to be saved, they would be saved. Yet in His infinite and immeasurable wisdom he has chosen a path where He receives glory and our joy is full. The limit is in the application not the provision. What Jesus did is fully sufficient to accomplish the Father's will. The application of the provision is made when one agrees with God concerning His opinion of sinners and their need of His Son. Whether or not this ability is innate and capable of being done by everyone

everywhere at all times is the source of another study. For us it is enough to know that Jesus saves sinners of whom we are the chief.

The issue as to what might cause a limited atonement is not raised in 1 John. The sufficiency of the provision is addressed and its application is by confessing. Those who confess [i.e. agree with God] are saved and those who do not confess [i.e. disagree with God] continue in darkness and death. This brings us to our final point.

IV. This world is only overcome by faith in the provision made by God in His Son (1 John 5:4, 5).

⁴“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. ⁵Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4, 5).

Those born of God push against those whose father is the devil. Those agreeing with God and are thus born of God break free from the fallen realm in which fallen humanity exists. The only way to overcome our rebellion against God is by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

This leads us to a rather simple conclusion.

Shepherding the Sheep: (What’s the NEXT STEP?)

1. The issue of worldliness is more severe than perhaps initially understood. Do you have a heart of unbelief?
2. Have you “bogged down” in theological wrangling and lost sight of what is critically important?

3. In what ways might the world be “marketing” their wares?
4. Are you are a sinner aligned with the devil and alienated from God?
5. Do you **know** Jesus is your only hope?
6. Will you **believe** Him today?

APPENDIX 1

SALVATION'S LIMITATION

What follows are two different authors commenting on the word “world” in 1 John 2:2 and whether or not it is limited or unlimited as it relates to the atonement. Its inclusion is only for personal consideration without any desire to push the reader one way or the other.

1 John 2:2 Commentary [Colin G. Kruse]

When the author says that Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for ‘the sins of the whole world’, that includes not only our sins (i.e., the sins of believers) but the sins of the unbelieving world as well.

It is not easy to explain what the author means by saying that Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice ‘for the sins of the whole world’. It is not unique within the Johannine writings, for in John 1:29 the Baptist hails Jesus as ‘the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world’, and in 1 John 4:14 we read that ‘the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world’. That Jesus offered the atoning sacrifice ‘for the sins of the whole world’ cannot mean that all people’s sins are automatically forgiven so that all are the inheritors of eternal life, even if they do not believe in the name of the Son of God. The author himself rules out such an idea elsewhere in his letter. For example, in 5:11-13 he says that those who have the Son have eternal life, but those who do not have the Son do not have life. Having the Son involves believing in the Son, so that those who do not believe in him cannot be said to have him, and therefore they cannot be said to have eternal life. While we can say what Jesus Christ being the

atonement sacrifice 'for the sins of the whole world' does not mean, it is more difficult to say what it does mean, for the author gives us no clues. We might suggest that Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world because his death was sufficient to deal with the sins of the whole world, but that his sacrifice does not become effective until people believe in him.⁴

A Note on the Savior of the World

The expression 'Savior of the world' (*sōtēr tou kosmou*) is found only twice in the NT, here and in John 4:42. In John 4:42 it forms part of the Samaritan villagers' response to the woman who encountered Jesus at the well of Sychar. When they heard her testimony they came and met Jesus themselves, and then the evangelist says: 'They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world"'. In this context the expression 'Savior of the world' carries the sense that Jesus is the Savior of Samaritans as well as Jews. It is as Savior *of the world* that he is recognized. This is in line with the purpose of the Fourth Evangelist to acquaint his readers with the true identity of Jesus so that, believing in him, they might enjoy life in his name.

However, the concerns of 1 John are different from those of the Fourth Gospel. The background of 1 John was strife within the Christian community. The question of whether Jesus is the Savior *of the world* was not the issue. What was in question was whether Jesus needed to be recognized as Savior at all. In particular, it was whether belief in Jesus' death as an atoning sacrifice for sin was necessary. Those

who had seceded from the author's community denied that they had sinned (cf. 1:6-2:2 and commentary *ad loc.*) and argued that Jesus' atoning death was unnecessary and did not take place (cf. 5:6-8 and commentary *ad loc.*). Those who, with the author, acknowledge their sins, confessed the importance of Jesus' atoning sacrifice which provided cleansing from their sins. They confessed that the Father 'sent the Son to be the Savior of the world'.⁵

Unlimited Limited Atonement

Pastor Mark Driscoll⁶

1 John 2:2 He [Jesus] is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Thus far in our study of the atonement we have examined how God has saved us from separation from Himself and eternal death (penal substitution); Satan, demons, sin, and the world (Christus Victor); slavery to the curse of the law and sin (redemption); painful eternal suffering (new covenant sacrifice); unrighteousness (imputed righteousness); condemnation, religion, and morality (justification); and the wrath of God (propitiation). With such tremendous benefits given through Jesus' death on the cross at stake, the question of whom Jesus died for has been hotly debated throughout church history.

Universalism contradicts the clear teachings of Scripture on human sinfulness (e.g., Ps. 51:5; 58:3; Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8) and hell (e.g., Dan. 12:2; Matt. 5:29-30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:23; 25:46). False Pelagianism also denies human sinfulness. Pelagianism is named after the ascetic monk Pelagius who lived in the fifth century and taught that people begin their

life morally good, like Adam, and through the decision of their own will could live a holy life that would obligate God to take them to heaven upon death. Pelagius was condemned as a heretic at the Council of Carthage in 418, thanks in part to his opponent Augustine, who taught the doctrines of human sinfulness and salvation by grace alone.

This leaves three remaining options for Christians regarding the question of whom Jesus died for. Before examining them and stating the position of the elders at Mars Hill, it deserves mentioning that we do welcome faithful Christians of differing opinions on this matter; **we accept it as a point of distinction but do not want it to become a point of division.**

First, some Christians (e.g., Nazarene, Assemblies of God, Foursquare, Calvary Chapel, Methodist, and Christian Church) believe that Jesus died for the sins of all people. This position is commonly referred to as Arminianism, after James Arminius, Wesleyanism, named after John Wesley, or Unlimited Atonement. They appeal to those Scriptures which speak of Jesus dying for all people (2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 Tim. 2:1-6; 4:10; Titus 2:11), the whole world (John 1:29; 3:16-17; 1 John 2:2; 4:14; Rev. 5:9), everyone (Isa. 53:6; Heb. 2:9), and not wanting anyone to perish (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). Arminians then teach that to be saved, all someone needs to do is simply choose Jesus. But, critics point out that if Jesus died to forgive everyone, then everyone would be saved, which is the heresy of universalism. Additionally, they state that no one will ever choose Jesus because sinners are spiritually dead (1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1), hostile to God (Rom. 8:7), never seek God (Rom. 3:11), cannot find God (Luke 19:10), do not choose God, and are only saved when God

chooses them (John 15:16) and draws them (John 6:44, 65). Second, some Christians (e.g., Presbyterians, Reformed Baptists, some Independent Bible churches) believe that Jesus dies only for the sins of the elect. This position is commonly referred to as Calvinism, named after John Calvin, Reformed Theology, or Limited Atonement. They commonly appeal to those Scriptures which speak of Jesus dying only for some people but not all people (Matt. 1:21; 20:28; 26:28; Rom. 5:12-19), His sheep (John 10:11, 15, 26-27), His church (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25), the elect (Rom. 8:32-35), His people (Matt. 1:21), His friends (John 15:3), and all Christians (2 Cor. 5:15; Titus 2:14). At first glance, Unlimited and Limited Atonement are in opposition. But, that dilemma is resolved by noting two things. First, the two categories are not mutually exclusive; since Jesus died for the sins of everyone that means that He also died for the sins of the elect. Second, Jesus' death for all people does not accomplish the same thing as His death for the elect. This point is complicated, but is in fact taught in Scripture (1 Tim. 4:10; 2 Peter 2:1). Simply, by dying for everyone, Jesus purchased everyone as His possession and He then applies His forgiveness to the elect by grace and applies His wrath to the non-elect. Objectively, Jesus' death was sufficient to save anyone, and, subjectively, only efficient to save those who repent of their sin and trust in Him. This position is called Unlimited Limited Atonement or Modified Calvinism. Therefore, Modified Calvinists like the Mars Hill elders do not believe anything different than Arminians; we simply believe what they believe and more. Lastly, perhaps the Old Testament sacrificial system provides the best illustration of this both/and position. The High Priest would offer a sacrifice for the sins of the whole nation on the Day of Atonement; this is, in effect, unlimited atonement. Then,

each worshipper would repent of their own sins as demonstrated by the giving of their own sacrifices for their sins; this is, in effect, limited atonement.

APPENDIX 2

ACROSTICS FOR DIFFERENT POSITIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE HUMAN CONDITION AND GOD'S WORK OF REDEMPTION

<http://www.thewardrobedoor.com/2010/08/theological-flower-bed-tulip-daisy.html>

CALVINISM: TULIP

T: *Total depravity* - Every facet of every person everywhere has been marred by sin.

U: *Unconditional election* - God chooses those to be saved based solely on His will.

L: *Limited atonement* - Christ died only for those who are elect.

I: *Irresistible grace* - The elect cannot resist God's call to salvation.

P: *Perseverance of the saints* - The elect cannot lose their salvation.

ARMINIANISM: DAISY

D: *Diminished depravity* - Humanity is depraved, but God uses prevenient grace to restore man's ability to respond to Him.

A: *Abrogated election* - God bases His election on His foreknowledge of those who freely choose Him.

I: *Impersonal atonement* - Christ died for everyone, making salvation possible for everyone.

S: *Sedentary grace* - God calls everyone to salvation, but many freely reject it.

Y: *Yieldable justification* - The saved can fall from grace and lose their salvation.

MOLINISM: ROSES

R: *Radical depravity* - Every aspect of humanity is depraved, but we are not always as bad as we could be.

O: *Overcoming grace* - God's grace is persistent in the life of the believer, but it can be resisted.

S: *Sovereign election* - God desires the salvation of all, but our salvation is based on His choice not ours.

E: *Eternal life* - God grants believers eternal security in their salvation.

S: *Singular redemption* - Christ died sufficiently for all people, but efficiently only for the saved.

ENDNOTES

¹ Colin G. Kruse, *The Letters of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 74.

² <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/world.html>

³ See APPENDIX 2

⁴ Colin G. Kruse, *The Letters of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 74, 75.

⁵ Colin G. Kruse, *The Letters of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 164.

⁶ http://marshill.com/files/2005/11/20/20051120_unlimited-limited-atonement_document_9143.pdf

Studies in 1 John

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Our initial study found us “marking” sin. Sin leaves the sinner empty and in humanly unfixable need. Sin permeates the world. It encases the world. It is with this in mind we tackle Pastor John’s usage of the word “world.” The world has several meanings. Our intent is not to exhaust various meanings, but to focus on Pastor John’s usage of the word world in his first letter to the churches of Asia Minor.

Pastor John describes a world that lies in the power of the evil one. This world stands in active opposition to the Father’s will. This world is “marketing” its opposition so that others would follow its ways. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. This world is of the serpent’s seed [think of the flood narrative {Gen. 6-9}]. Many within the world would argue how the world is getting better, not worse. Perhaps the world is better for the comfort and convenience of the creaturely, but to think this world is openly embracing the gospel and becoming more dependent on God is silly. We must place the perpetual rebellion against God inside of the greater *Story* told in Genesis 3:15 and Genesis 3:21. In order for God to rescue His people **from their sin and for their joy** He would send His only begotten Son into the world to be the Savior of His people. God’s Christ, His hero would be met with fierce opposition by the serpent’s offspring. The world is this offspring. This world does not know the Father (1 John 3:1). In fact, this world hates God and those born of God (1 John 3:13).

From Pastor John’s perspective those who need God’s wrath placated, need Jesus to be their Savior and need Him as their Advocate (1 John 2:1, 2) are those in active opposition to Him. Those in active opposition to Him are those God’s plan of rescue is through the woman’s seed.

